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the exposition of radical movements plunges us into regions which the eastern mind is not yet prepared to enter.

Occidental advice to the Orient will for some time, no doubt, be taken at a discount in view of the vast martial explosion which has rudely interrupted the peaceful progress of all western lands and sent its powerful shocks around the world. Non-Christian peoples will now be quick to say that after nineteen centuries Christianity is unable to control its leading exponents. But in the end, after the smoke of battle has cleared away, both Orient and Occident will see that it is dogmatic Christianity, and *not* ethical Christianity, that has failed. The former has been tried and found wanting. The latter has not really been tried at all. Hence, the war should make Professor Henderson's lectures even more in point than before. And later on, the seed that he has sown will help to prepare the Orient for further expositions of western social programs.

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A NEW INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

A new volume by Dussaud¹ is the first of a proposed series, entitled a "historic library of religions," under the editorship of the author and Paul Alphandéry. This series is undertaken with the hope of "enlarging the basis of the peculiarly historic method in order to attain, through the comparison of similar phenomena, a deeper and more complete understanding" of the problems of the subject. This volume has for its purpose the introduction of the reader to these problems, and is intended, not as a solution of them, but to induce independent thought and judgment, and the careful observation of the *concrete*.

The conclusion to which this "introduction" leads, takes the form of an addition to the already multitudinous number of definitions of religion, thus: "a religion consists in the organized mass of beliefs and practices which are intended to enlarge and perpetuate the 'life-principle' of the individual, of the group and of the [forces of] nature" (p. 290). The whole of the treatise is devoted to the elaboration of this thesis, and one might almost call it a Bergsonian interpretation of the rites and ceremonies of religion as distinguished from its dogmas.

The study begins with an examination of Animism, and the several explanations of the origin of religion which relates it to this source, among

¹ *Introduction à l'histoire des religions*. By R. Dussaud. Paris: Leroux, 1914. vi+292 pages. Fr. 3.50.

them those of Spencer, Max Müller, Tylor, and Frazer are rejected as being "insufficient," for two reasons: first, they refer all cultus either to the adoration of God (i.e., *the god*, with a capital "G") or to several gods, when in reality there is often no other conception than that of *a god*, and secondly, they content themselves with an abstraction, a vague formula which would never call forth (*évoquer*) the "mechanism" of religion (p. 11). No more can the foundation of religion be discovered in totemism, for on a theory such as that of Durkheim, that the "totem" was originally an "ensign" or mark of social organization, there is no explanation of *why* the moral force which constitutes the clan is conceived of under the form of the *whole* of a species, either animal or vegetable, and on a theory such as Frazer's, which arbitrarily leads him to deny to totemism *any* religious significance, one would be compelled to eliminate Buddhism also from the class of religions. None of the theories of totemism so far advanced are satisfactory, and it must be looked upon as something more than mere "collective impressions" and to have a more profound significance than a mere "standard" or symbol (p. 16).

The third chapter brings forward the conception of the "life-principle" (*principe de vie*) as the most primitive and fundamental concept in the development of the practices of religion. The theory of Durkheim as to the significance of the totem is adopted in so far as it holds that there is *in the totem* a superior force, and this is declared to be the spirit of life which the primitive mind conceived of as animating all things and living creatures alike, though *not in the same degree*. The interesting suggestion is made that the origin of the idea that this superior force was *indwelling*, both in animals and vegetables, is to be found in the fact that man sustains his physical life by eating these things (p. 22). As to the disputed relationship between the zoölatry of Egypt and totemism, the opinion is advanced that while the animal worship of Egypt had its origin, like totemism, in this conception of a universal vital principle, the worship of animals by the Egyptians was *not* totemistic. In summing up his theory of a "life-principle" the author says: "It is in reaching out beyond reality that human thought has led man on in the way of progress. Thus religion has been simply *one* of the ways by which man has sought, not only to live, but to increase his resources of energy, his possibilities (*potentiel*)."

The god-idea is discussed under the two headings, "Gods and Nature" and "Group Gods," and its development is traced from the simplest animistic idea of a vital force dwelling in certain places or certain elements, to the concept of God as the "God of the whole earth." In

the numerous examples of coalescence of nature gods with group gods, or the syncretistic union of several group gods, we are warned against the error of referring all the diverse elements of the combination to one explanation (p. 70). As an example of discrimination, the author considers the God of the Hebrews as originally the Kenite's tutelar deity, introduced to Israel by Moses, but he thinks the "incommunicable name" a mere *jeu de mot* (p. 82, note), and traces the universal sovereignty of Jehovah to the influence of Persian ideas, brought in through the "second Isaiah." The "life-principle" is found to persist in the idea of St. Paul, who, however, makes the Christian God to be the God of the particular group of the faithful (p. 85; cf. Col. 3:4 ff.).

In the discussion of material representations of the spirits of nature and the gods, we are reminded that because the *source* of the power of a fetish is often ignored, we are not forced to conclude that we have nothing but a mere abstraction (p. 88), and here again the application of the theory of "life-principle" is made with telling effect. There is nothing worthy of special notice in the explanation of the "sanctuary and its organization," unless it be the rejection of Frazer's theory that all religion comes from the practice of magic, and the espousal of the counter theory that priesthood has developed from the paternal right of *pontifex dominiciae*. The subsequent restrictions upon the exercise of the office of priesthood are related to tabu, but are all intended to conserve the "life-principle" of the community as a whole. Robertson Smith is commended for his dictum that "one life animates the god and all things [êtres] dwelling in the sanctuary" (p. 112; cf. *Religion of the Semites*, 2d ed., p. 159).

Perhaps the most interesting contribution of the book is the discussion of sacrifice, which takes up two chapters. The essential feature of all sacrifice is found in the idea of blood-bond, and the theory of "life-principle" is combined with this fundamental concept of primitive man to explain the rite of sacrificial offerings of all sorts. The argument is largely founded on the observations of Father Jaussen, as set forth in his work, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab*. The earlier theory of Robertson Smith (*op. cit.*) that "communion" is the "essence" of sacrifice, and the more recent one of Hubert and Maus that "a sacrifice is a religious act which, by the consecration of a victim, modifies the condition of the offerer or of the things in which he is interested" (p. 119) are both deemed inadequate, but significant, and they are combined with the "life-principle" explanation as to *why* sacrifice is considered efficacious. The upshot of the argument is that the union of the offerer with the

recipient of the offering, through the medium of the blood which is shed, and in which is symbolized that life which is common to both, is the essence of sacrifice, or rather its underlying concept and principle. This theory is not limited to bloody sacrifices alone, but also underlies all forms of offering, the "first-fruits" being offered to the *source* of their peculiar existence, and acting, by a sort of purification, to prevent the evils which would surely result to the individual or the group if this ceremony were omitted. Other unbloody sacrifices serve either as a "substitute" for the more correct animal victim or are conceived of, as in the case of fetishes and material representations of the gods, as being animated by their own "life-principle."

Enough has been said to show the method of the author and the thoroughgoing way in which his theory is applied, and further detail would be superfluous. The work contains also a consideration of prayer, of the cult of the dead, of initiations, fêtes, ritual prohibitions, myth and dogma, and the development of moral notions, all of which are related to the thesis which underlies the work. We may close this fragmentary summary with the caution which the author gives to those who would always insist that the cult is *anterior* to the myth, that it is a question of the *kind* of myth. Many myths arise from the desire for an explanation of customs, the reason for which is no longer clear, but there are frequent cases in which the cult has developed from a myth, particularly when there is commemoration of certain events which have become marvelous (p. 271).

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BRIEF MENTION

OLD TESTAMENT

KITTEL, GERHARD. *Die Oden Salomo's: überarbeitet oder einheitlich?* (Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testamente.) Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1914. 180 pages. M. 5; bound, M. 6.

A son of the veteran Old Testament scholar at Leipzig presents his maiden effort to the scholarly world. Two recent works, J. Rendel Harris, *Odes and Psalms of Solomon from the Syriac Version* (1909), and J. Labourt and P. Batiffol, *Les odes de Solomon* (1911), with some minor treatises were available for his service. The numerous articles and other treatises on the Odes of Solomon during the last five years have discussed nearly every phase of the problems which have been raised. Kittel confines his attention exclusively to the general historical order of the odes. This is his problem. The first part handles the style of these documents with some considerable acumen. With his specifications of the style he plunges into the second